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IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 4-11 in their entirety without prejudice nor disclaimer of the subject matter set forth therein.

Please amend claims 1, 2 and 3 as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) 1. A needle blade roll for use in an artificial cotton fabricating apparatus (1) which fabricates artificial cotton by forming from a material (2) capable of formation of artificial cotton a large number of short fibers (3) ranging in fiber length between 1 and 200 mm and by accumulating said short fibers (3), said needle blade roll being mounted rotatably in a cylindrical casing (11) in order that a large number of short fibers (3) can be formed from said material (2), wherein said needle blade roll comprises a roll main body (13) and a large number of needle blades (14) implanted into a peripheral surface of said roll main body (13) and wherein each said needle blade (14) is arranged at a sloping angle relative to an associated radial line of said roll main body (13) so that its leading end lies ahead of said radial line with respect to the rotational direction of said roll main body (13).

a clearance (C) between said leading ends of said needle blades and an internal peripheral surface of said casing falls in a range of $50\mu\text{m} < C < 500\mu\text{m}$, and

said material capable of formation of artificial cotton of said artificial cotton fabricating apparatus comprises a uniaxial drawn substance of polytetrafluoroethylene and/or an ethylene/tetrafluoroethylene copolymer.

2. (Currently Amended) The needle blade roll of claim 1, wherein said needle blades (14) are implanted into said roll main body (13) so that said sloping angle (θ) relative to the radial line of said roll main body (13) falls in a range of $5^\circ \leq \theta \leq 30^\circ$.

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3. (Currently Amended) The needle blade roll of either claim 1 or claim 2, wherein said needle blades ~~(14)~~ are arranged in helical fashion on the peripheral surface of said roll main body ~~(13)~~.

4.-11. (Canceled)